

# PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION & QUOTATIONS (MLA)

(rev. 11/22/09)

**NOTE:** Sources for this document are the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* and English teachers at Eden Prairie High School.

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## PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION: THE BASICS

### 1. What is “parenthetical documentation”?

Along with your “works cited,” or what was formerly called a “bibliography,” **parenthetical documentation** is a way to tell your readers not only what works you used in writing the paper but also, according to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “what you derived from each source and where in the work you found the material. The most practical way to supply this information is to insert a brief parenthetical acknowledgment (called a “parenthetical reference”) in your paper wherever you incorporate another’s words, facts, or ideas. Usually the author’s last name and a page reference are enough to identify the source and the specific location from which you borrowed material” (214).

### EXAMPLE OF PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION:

Medieval Europe was a place both of “raids, pillages, slavery, and extortion” and of “traveling merchants, monetary exchange, towns if not cities, and active markets in grain” (Townsend 10).



According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, the parenthetical reference “(Townsend 10)” indicates that the quotations come from page 10 of a work by Townsend. Given the author’s last name, your readers can find complete publication information for the source in the alphabetically arranged list of works cited that follows the text of your paper (214).

#### **EXAMPLE OF CORRESPONDING WORKS CITED ENTRY:**

Townsend, Robert M. *The Medieval Village Economy*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993. Print.

### **2. When is a parenthetical reference needed?**

Readers expect to see a parenthetical reference following each direct quotation. When you paraphrase ideas or information from one of your research sources, a parenthetical reference is also required. Even if you’ve introduced a source once in your paper and included a parenthetical reference, you need to continue adding parenthetical references for each new quotation or paraphrase from that source. You are more likely to lose points for leaving out parenthetical references than for putting in too many. So, when in doubt, don’t leave the parenthetical reference out!

### **3. How does the parenthetical documentation relate to the works-cited page?**

The parenthetical documentation must exactly match the corresponding entries in your list of works cited. The author’s name or title of the work must be clearly identified either in the text leading up to the quote or paraphrase or else must appear in the parenthetical reference.

#### **EXAMPLE OF PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION:**

According to Karl F. Zender, *Romeo and Juliet* presents an opposition between two worlds: “the world of the everyday,” associated with the adults in the play, and “the world of romance,” associated with the two lovers (138). Romeo and Juliet’s language of love nevertheless becomes “fully responsive to the tang of actuality” (141). Shakespeare’s choice of words is particularly telling in the balcony scene as the word “variable” can be defined as “fickle” (“Variable,” def. 2b).



**EXAMPLE OF CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRIES:****Works Cited**

“Variable.” Def. 2b. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1992. Print.

Zender, Karl F. “Loving Shakespeare’s Lovers: Character Growth in *Romeo and Juliet*.” *Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet*. Ed.

Maurice Hunt. New York: MLA, 2000. 137-43. Print.

**4. Where should the parenthetical documentation be placed?**

The citation must be placed so that it is clear which ideas have been taken from a source; at the same time, you do not want to impede the flow of your sentence. Whenever possible, place your parenthetical citation closest to the place where you have stated the quote or idea you have “borrowed.” The parenthetical documentation is usually at the end of a sentence.

By convention, commas and periods go inside quotation marks, but a parenthetical reference changes this rule. At the end of the quoted material, place the closing quotation marks, followed by the parenthetical reference, and then finally the ending punctuation for the sentence. This will seem odd because you are essentially putting the punctuation mark for the sentence on hold, but the closing quotation marks and the parenthetical reference should be thought of as part of the sentence and therefore must be enclosed in the punctuation for the sentence. See [Guideline 6: HAPPY ENDINGS--CLOSING PUNCTUATION FOR SENTENCES WITH DIRECT QUOTES](#) in this document for more details, including what to do if your quote ends with a period or an exclamation point, but the basic formula is ” ( ).

When **citing a quotation**, end quotation marks are placed BEFORE the parenthetical reference as in the following examples.

**EXAMPLES (DQ’s):**

It may be true that “in the appreciation of medieval art the attitude of the observer is of primary importance” (Beauvais 136).

Many critics stated, “Wilson’s poetry, filled with odd ideas, reflects his reclusive nature” (Stark 24-25).



When **paraphrasing**, sentence punctuation FOLLOWS parenthetical documentation as in the following examples.

**EXAMPLES (PARAPHRASES):**

**The poet Wilson was a recluse with odd ideas (Stark 24-25).**

**According to many English instructors, a neat paper makes a better impression  
(Nebeker and Wallenberg 422).**

To avoid interrupting the flow of your writing, place the parenthetical reference where a pause would naturally occur as near as possible to the material documented. If it is not possible to put the citation at the end of the sentence, try to place it next to a natural “rest” point in the sentence.

**EXAMPLE:** This policy, although strongly opposed by Carlson (Strand 56), was  
eventually adopted.

Parenthetical documentation directly after a quotation follows the closing quotation mark.

**EXAMPLE:** In the late Renaissance, Machiavelli contended that human beings  
were by nature “ungrateful” and “mutable” (1240), and Montaigne  
thought them “miserable and puny” (1343).



## **SECTION ONE: USING SOURCES**

**NOTE:** The following guidelines are adapted from the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* and Susan M. Hubbuch's *Writing Research Papers Across the Curriculum* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

Because the purpose of a research paper or an analytical essay is to synthesize your thoughts with what other writers or researchers have written about a particular topic, much of your paper will reference, by direct quote, paraphrase, or summary, the information from the sources you have used. When writing a research paper, it may be helpful to think of yourself as a complier and analyst rather than an author. Unlike other types of writing assignments, your research paper should show what you learned about your topic and where you learned it rather than focusing primarily on your own thoughts and ideas. Thus, knowing how to skillfully integrate the thoughts and words of other authors is crucial to your success. Equally crucial is giving proper credit to your sources by correctly documenting your references. This section will cover how to use quotes and paraphrases. The second section of this document will cover the particulars of the parenthetical documentation for those quotes and paraphrases.

Remember that documentation of sources must be done as you compose your paper. NEVER CUT AND PASTE WORDS FROM A SOURCE INTO YOUR PAPER WITHOUT ADDING QUOTATION MARKS AND A REFERENCE TO THE AUTHOR AND THE PAGE NUMBER (if available).

### **Guideline 1: ENSURING CREDIBILITY OF SOURCES & REFERENCING SOURCES IN YOUR TEXT**

Using parenthetical documentation is not enough to assure your reader that your sources are reliable or credible. You must establish credibility directly in your paper.

If you cannot establish credibility, be highly skeptical of using the source. Be particularly skeptical of websites that end in .com! Check with your teacher for further direction on this issue.

In order to ensure credibility, you must include the author's credentials the first time you cite the author in your paper. This means giving a brief description of the position the author holds or what the author has written, etc., that qualifies him or her as a source of information for the topic you are writing about.

**EXAMPLE:** According to Lynda Ruce, professor of English literature at Harvard University, "E.D. Hirsch's ideas on cultural literacy are key to every teacher's curriculum" (75).

**NOTE:** In this parenthetical documentation, only the page number (75) instead of (Ruce 75) needs to be included because the author's name was given within the text.



The first time you talk about each source in your paper, use the author's full name. After the first mention, you should then refer to the author by last name only, unless more information is required to distinguish the name from other sources in your paper.

**EXAMPLE:** F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of *The Great Gatsby*, brought the Jazz

Age to life in his writing. In *Gatsby*, Fitzgerald describes the splendor of

*Gatsby's* mansion and the squalor of Wilson's garage equally vividly (78).

**NOTE:** In addition to showing how Fitzgerald's name is used after the first full reference, the example above shows how to use a shortened version of a title. According the *MLA Handbook*, "If you cite a title often in the text of your paper, you may, after stating the title in full at least once, use a shortened form, preferably a familiar or obvious one" (92).

## **Guideline 2: WHEN TO USE DIRECT QUOTES**

When you take another writer's exact words and copy them down in your paper, that is called a "**direct quotation**." The words in the original source MAY or MAY NOT have quotation marks already around them. For example, the quotation may be a passage of dialogue spoken by a character in a novel and may already be in quotation marks, or the quotation may be the words of the narrator, which might not be in quotation marks. The definition of "direct quotation," then, does not depend on whether or not the cited author originally had quotation marks around the words. If you copy down anything word for word, you must use quotation marks, and you must acknowledge the source. You must copy down the direct quotation EXACTLY as you found it in its original source.

Don't overuse direct quotations in your papers. Experienced writers occasionally quote directly from their sources, but they don't let other people write their essays for them. Rather, they quote the words of other people when the idea they are developing involves the perspective or point of view of another person--a point of view that is best established or illustrated by this person's exact words.

Note that in most cases the point of view can be established or illustrated by quoting just a few words or perhaps a sentence. When you choose to use the exact words of your source, you must use quotation marks and you must **ALWAYS INTEGRATE** the quoted material into your own writing. See [Guideline 4: ALWAYS LEAD INTO \(INTEGRATE\) DQ'S](#) below about how to lead into quotes and how to embed quotes into sentences.

## **Guideline 3: WHEN TO USE PARAPHRASES**

When you summarize or otherwise put into your own words the information or ideas of another author, you are paraphrasing. Don't think of paraphrasing as simply a way to avoid using quotation marks. Being able to summarize and to make analytical references to the source material you read shows your skill as a reader and a writer. If you use skillful paraphrases for most of your information, the direct quotes you choose to use will be more powerful.

A skillful paraphrase means you are doing more than taking a quote and changing just enough words to say that the quote is now "in your own words." Most often, you will give your reader a summary of the main idea that a source presented.



**EXAMPLE:** In his discussion of the need for a green revolution, Friedman is critical of those who characterize saving the planet as something we can accomplish with easy and painless lifestyle changes (78).

This sentence summarizes multiple paragraphs of Friedman's argument and could be used as lead-in to a well-chosen quote from the book.

Remember that PARAPHRASES HAVE THE SAME REQUIREMENTS FOR PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION AS QUOTES DO. You must give credit, even when you have summarized or changed the wording. Refer to section two of this document for details about using parenthetical documentation with paraphrases.

#### **Guideline 4: ALWAYS LEAD INTO (INTEGRATE) DQ's**

First, quoted material should NEVER stand alone in your paper. ALWAYS lead into quotations with your own words, either by setting up the context for the material you are quoting or by incorporating the words of others in your own sentences.

**DO NOT PLACE QUOTATIONS BACK-TO-BACK LIKE THIS:** The value of many diet drugs is highly questionable. “Starch blockers are a fraud” (Kline 62). “Many hunger suppressants are dangerous because they raise blood pressure” (Suter 82).

**HERE IS A BETTER APPROACH:** The value of many diet drugs is highly questionable. Based on a series of studies he has conducted, Dr Benjamin Kline flatly states that “[s]tarch blockers are a fraud” (62). Tests of other diet drugs reveal potentially dangerous side effects. A report by the Science Research Institute concludes, “Many hunger suppressants are dangerous because they raise blood pressure” (Suter 82).

As seen in the example above, quote ONLY those words, phrases, or sentences necessary to make your point about the author's point of view. Do not use the words of another to express ideas that you can just as easily express in your own words.



## **Guideline 5: 101 WAYS TO INCORPORATE QUOTES & HOW TO PUNCTUATE YOUR WAY INTO THEM**

Okay, there are not actually 101 ways. But good writers will use a variety of sentence constructions for the material they are quoting. As long as your sentences remain clear and grammatically correct, you can incorporate quotes in a variety of ways. For example:

**ONE WAY TO DO IT:** Shelley held a bold view: “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).

**ANOTHER WAY TO DO IT:** Shelley thought poets “the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).

**YET ANOTHER WAY TO DO IT:** “Poets,” according to Shelley, “are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).

Notice the differences in punctuation in the examples above. According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “Whether set off from the text or run into it, quoted material is usually preceded by a colon if the quotation is formally introduced and by a comma or no punctuation if the quotation is an integral part of the sentence structure” (102).

Some techniques for incorporating quoted material include using a lead-in statement with a “verb of saying” (71), using a lead-in statement followed by a colon, and embedding.

You can put a quote in your paper by **using a lead-in statement with a “verb of saying”** (71). A “verb of saying” sets the reader up to expect the quote. A verb of saying could be as basic as “said” or could be a more specific verb such as one of the following: thought, concluded, observed, explained, conjectured, surmised, determined, revealed, argued, etc.

To create an effective lead-in, the first part of your sentence should set up the quote by telling who (author, researcher, organization, study, etc.) said (or thought, concluded, observed, etc.) the idea in the quote.



**EXAMPLES OF VERB OF SAYING LEAD-INS:****Hardy writes,****According to Peterson,****Willey has concluded,****The National Safety Council argues,**

Generally, a verb of saying is followed by a comma and then by the quoted sentence or phrase. If the quote that follows the verb of saying and the comma is a complete sentence, begin the quote with a capital letter.

**EXAMPLE:** Dr. Carl Smith has concluded, “There is no evidence that large doses of vitamin C have any beneficial effect” (134).

However, if you use the word *that* with the verb of saying, you eliminate the need for a comma. With the word *that*, you integrate the quote into the grammatical structure of your sentence; therefore, do not begin the quote with a capital letter, even if it is capitalized in the source.

**EXAMPLE:** Dr. Carl Smith has concluded that “[t]here is no evidence that large doses of vitamin C have any beneficial effect” (134).

Note that the change from the upper-case “T” in the original quote to the lower-case “t” requires brackets [ ] to indicate an alteration to the quoted material. See [Guideline 11: ALTERING QUOTATIONS](#) below for more details about when brackets are needed.

Remember that your lead-in can always be rephrased to avoid awkward alterations of quotes. See the examples of embedded quotes below.

Note that a lead-in statement does not always have to be at the beginning of a sentence.

**EXAMPLES:** Joseph Conrad writes of the company manager in *Heart of Darkness*, “He was obeyed, yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect” (87).

OR



**“He was obeyed,” writes Joseph Conrad of the company manager in *Heart of Darkness*, “yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect” (87).**

A quote can also be set up **using a lead-in statement followed by a colon**. According to the *MLA Handbook*, “Use a colon to introduce a quotation that is independent from the structure of the main sentence” (71).

**EXAMPLES:** Dr. Carl Smith doubts the value of taking large amounts of vitamin C:

**“There is no evidence that large doses of vitamin C have any beneficial effect” (134).**

**In *The Awakening*, Mme Ratignolle exhorts Robert Lebrun to stop flirting with Edna: “She is not one of us; she is not like us” (Chopin 42).**

**Embedding** quoted material into your sentence means that you are taking directly quoted words or phrases from your source and using them, with quotation marks, within the grammatical structure of your own sentence. Embedding allows you to smoothly integrate quotes and to highlight only the most powerful language of the source material.

**EXAMPLES:** Dr. Carl Smith sees “no evidence” of any benefit from taking “large amounts of vitamin C” (134).

**For Charles Dickens the eighteenth century was both “the best of times” and “the worst of times” (35).**

**NOTE:** When you are embedding quoted material, even if you are directly quoting only part of a sentence from your source, you do NOT need to use ellipses marks to indicate that you cut part of the quote. According to the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook*, “You need not always reproduce complete sentences. Sometimes you may want to quote just a word or phrase as part of your sentence. [. . .] If you quote only a word or a phrase, it will be obvious that you left out some of the original sentence” (93, 97). For more about when ellipsis marks are needed, see [section A of Guideline 11: ALTERING QUOTATIONS](#).



**When writing about literature**, you should not retell the story to set up a quote, but you do need to give some context. Your lead-in for the quote must establish who is speaking and give some information about what is happening at that point the novel, play, etc. so that quote will make sense.

**EXAMPLE:** Perhaps it is his relationship with Julia that emboldens Winston to take the risk of declaring, "We are enemies of the Party," to O'Brien (Orwell 170).

### **Guideline 6: HAPPY ENDINGS--CLOSING PUNCTUATION FOR SENTENCES WITH DIRECT QUOTES**

Incorporating quotes into sentences upsets the normal order of punctuation. You are taking sentences--which might end in periods, exclamation points, or question marks--from a source and making them part of your sentence, which will have its own ending punctuation. In most cases the sentence(s) being quoted yield their original punctuation to integrate with your sentence.

Suppose you want to quote the following sentence: "This above all, to thine own self be true." If you put the quote at the end of the sentence, the period has to be pushed away from its original placement so that the sentence can include the closing quotation marks and the parenthetical reference. Placed at the end of a sentence with a quote in this way, the period is serving as closing punctuation for both the quote and the containing sentence (your sentence that contains the quoted material).

**EXAMPLE:** Speaking about the importance of honesty, Polonius says, "This above all, to thine own self be true" (1.3.78).

If you begin your sentence with this line, you have to replace the closing period with a punctuation mark appropriate to the new context in your sentence. In this case, the period becomes a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** "This above all, to thine own self be true," says Polonius about the importance of honesty (1.3.78).

In general, the ending punctuation of the quoted material will be changed or moved to integrate into your sentence or to include the parenthetical reference, but **QUOTES ENDING IN QUESTION MARKS OR EXCLAMATION POINTS GET TO KEEP THEIR ENDING PUNCTUATION INSIDE THE QUOTATION MARKS**. This is because the question mark or exclamation point relates to the quoted material, not the entire containing sentence.

**EXAMPLES:** Audiences love when the poet asks, "Are we losing our conviction?" (Mali 74).



**“How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe?” (42) wonders the doctor in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.**

**Audiences love when the poet yells, "The concept of conviction has been lost in society today!" (Mali 74).**

Note that in the examples above, the containing sentences end in a period.

Each tricky combination of quotation and sentence punctuation has its own complications. Sometimes the quoted sentence ends in a period, but the containing sentence ends in a question mark or an exclamation point. In the example below, the period from the quoted sentence is dropped in favor of the question mark that ends the containing sentence.

**EXAMPLE:** Do audiences applaud when Mali says, "You’ve got to speak with it, too" (Mali 74)?

Here are some additional examples of quotation and sentence punctuation combinations.

**If you are asking a question about someone’s quoted question, your sentence, as well as the quoted question at the end of the sentence, would seem to both need a question mark. However, use only ONE question mark. Place it INSIDE the closing quotation marks like this:**

**EXAMPLE:** Would Taylor Mali ever ask, “How much should teachers make?” (Mali 74).

**If you are asking a question about someone’s quoted exclamation, the exclamation needs an exclamation mark, and your question would need its own question mark like this:**

**EXAMPLE:** Is it true Billy Collins yelled, “The poets did it!” (Mali 74)?

**If you are quoting someone who is quoting someone else who is asking a question or exclaiming something, then it would look like this:**

**EXAMPLE:** Diana Fu states, “I love it when Mali asks, ‘Are we losing our conviction?’” (Mali 74).



If you are quoting someone who is quoting someone else's statement, it would look like this:

**EXAMPLE:** Diana Fu states, "My favorite part of the performance is when Taylor Mali says, 'You've got to speak with it, too'" (Mali 74).

If you are quoting someone who is asking about someone else's exclamation or question, it would look like this:

**EXAMPLE:** Diana Fu asks, "Did you hear Taylor Mali say, 'The concept of conviction has been lost in society today'?" (Mali 74).

## **Guideline 7: HOW TO DO BLOCK QUOTES**

If you need to use a long prose passage of quoted material--one that will run more than four lines in your paper--you need to format it as a block quotation. Two of the fundamental rules for using quoted material change with block quotes: Do NOT use quotation marks with a block quote, and put the parenthetical reference OUTSIDE the closing punctuation rather than inside. You make the block quote clear to the reader by indenting the entire quote one inch in from the left margin.

Regarding block quotations, the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook* states: "A colon generally introduces a quotation displayed in this way, though sometimes the context may require a different mark of punctuation or none at all. If you quote only a single paragraph or part of one, do not indent the first line more than the rest" (94).

In summary, here are the steps to formatting a block quotation:

- (1) Do not use quotation marks!
- (2) Double space down from the text before and after the quotation.
- (3) Indent one inch in from left-hand, one-inch margin. The right margin should be flush with the usual one-inch margin.
- (4) Double space the quote when typing.
- (5) The final sentence in the block quote should end with whatever punctuation it had in the original source. The parenthetical reference follows the ending punctuation. Do not add any additional punctuation after the reference.



**EXAMPLE:**

At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (186)



## **Guideline 8: HOW TO QUOTE POEMS**

Quoting poetry requires particular attention because the placement of words into lines and the arrangement of those lines on the page were given particular attention by the poet. For example, when you quote poetry, use a slash mark (/) to let your reader know where the poet placed line breaks. Also, non-standard capitalization is often used in poetry, and your incorporation of quotes from a poem needs to preserve the poet's choices. **DO NOT CHANGE CAPITALIZATION WHEN YOU QUOTE POETRY.** Your word processing program may try to “help you out” by automatically standardizing capitalization as you type, but you must double check to be sure you are keeping the capitalization of the poem as the author intended it.

**NOTE:** The parenthetical references for poems give line numbers rather than page numbers. See heading [M. CITING COMMON WORKS OF LITERATURE: POETRY](#) of section two in this document for details about parenthetical references for poetry.

The following explanations and examples come directly from pages 95-96 of the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook*.

If you quote part or all of a single line of verse that does not require special emphasis, put it in quotation marks within your text.

**Bradstreet frames the poem with a sense of mortality: “All things within this fading world hath end” (1).**

You may also incorporate two or three lines in this way, using a slash with a space on each side (/) to separate them.

**Reflecting on the “incident” in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, “Of all the things that happened there / That’s all that I remember” (11-12).**

Verse quotations of four or more lines should begin on a new line. Unless the quotation involves unusual spacing, indent each line one inch from the left margin and double-space between lines, adding no quotation marks that do not appear in the original. A parenthetical reference for a verse quotation set off from the text follows the last line of the quotation (as in quotations of prose); a parenthetical reference that will not fit on the line should appear on a new line, flush with the right margin of the page.



**Elizabeth Bishop's "In the Waiting Room" is rich in evocative detail:**

**It was winter. It got dark  
early. The waiting room  
was full of grown-up people,  
arctics and overcoats,  
lamps and magazines. (6-10)**

A line that is too long to fit within the right margin should be continued on the next line and the continuation indented an additional quarter inch. You may reduce the indentation of the quotation to less than one inch from the left margin if doing so will eliminate the need for such continuations.

If the spatial arrangement of the original lines, including indention and spacing within and between them, is unusual, reproduce it as accurately as possible.

**E. E. Cummings concludes the poem with this vivid description of a carefree scene, reinforced by the carefree form of the lines themselves:**

**it's  
spring  
and  
the  
goat-footed  
balloonMan      whistles  
far  
and  
wee (16-24)**



When a verse quotation begins in the middle of a line, the partial line should be positioned where it is in the original and not shifted to the left margin.

In “I Sit and Sew,” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, the speaker laments that social convention compels her to sit uselessly while her male compatriots lie in need on the battlefield:

My soul in pity flings  
Appealing cries, yearning only to go  
There in that holocaust of hell, those fields of woe—  
But—I must sit and sew. (11-14)

**NOTE:** If you need to make an omission in your quote of poetry, you use ellipsis marks with square brackets (see [section A of Guideline 11: ALTERING QUOTATIONS](#)) as you would with other types of sources, but if you want to leave out a line or more of a poem that appears in block format in your paper, you indicate the omission with a line of spaced periods. According the 7<sup>th</sup> ed. *MLA Handbook*, “The omission of a line or more in the middle of a poetry quotation that is set off from the text is indicated by a line of spaced periods approximately the length of a complete line of the quoted poem” (100).

**EXAMPLE OF A QUOTATION OMITTING A LINE OR MORE IN THE MIDDLE:**

Elizabeth Bishop’s “In the Waiting Room” is rich in evocative detail:

In Worcester, Massachusetts,  
I went with Aunt Consuelo  
to keep her dentist’s appointment  
.....  
It was winter. It got dark  
early. (1-3, 6-7)



## **Guideline 9: HOW TO QUOTE PLAYS**

If you are quoting a short (fewer than four lines as typed in your paper) passage of dialogue from one character, you can incorporate it into your paper in the same way you would use any other direct quotation. If you want to quote an exchange of dialogue between two characters or a passage including dialogue and stage directions, you need to set the quoted material off from the text in the same way you would for a block quotation.

The following explanations and examples come directly from pages 96-7 of the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook*.

If you quote dialogue between two or more characters in a play, set the quotation off from your text. Begin each part of the dialogue with the appropriate character's name indented one inch from the left margin and written in all capital letters: HAMLET. Follow the name with a period, and start the quotation. Indent all subsequent lines in that character's speech an additional quarter inch. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new line indented one inch from the left margin. Maintain this pattern throughout the entire quotation.

**Marguerite Duras's screenplay for *Hiroshima mon amour* suggests at the outset the profound difference between observation and experience:**

**HE. You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing.**

**SHE. I saw everything. Everything. . . . The hospital, for instance,  
I saw it. I'm sure I did. There is a hospital in Hiroshima. How  
could I help seeing it?**

**HE. You did not see the hospital in Hiroshima. You saw nothing in  
Hiroshima. (2505-06)**







**EXAMPLES:** Dickens uses the seamstress to draw the final portrait of Carton's compassion: "“Are you dying for him?’ she whispered” (444).

If you want to include an exchange of dialogue, you will need to format the passage as a block quote even if it runs less than four lines. Each time the speaker changes in printed dialogue, a new paragraph is needed, so using a block quote format will show the paragraphing of your original source. See [Guideline 7: HOW TO DO BLOCK QUOTES](#). Because of the block quote format, you do not need quotation marks around the whole passage, so you simply reproduce the quotation marks as they originally appear in the source. Remember to place your parenthetical reference outside the final punctuation or final quotation mark of the quote.

**EXAMPLE:** Dickens uses the seamstress to draw the final portrait of Carton's compassion:

“Are you dying for him?” she whispered.

“And his wife and child. Hush! Yes.”

“O you will let me hold your brave hand, stranger?”

“Hush! Yes, my poor sister; to the last.” (444)

**The most important thing you can do to clarify quotes within quotes is establish context and identify the speaker(s) and or author(s) in your lead-in to the quote!**

This is especially true when you are using quotes within quotes that will require **referencing an indirect source** (see heading [I. CITING INDIRECT SOURCES](#) in section two). For example, if a reporter named Jones interviews President Obama and then writes a newspaper article that includes quotes from Obama and you want to use one of the quotes from Obama in your paper, Obama would be considered an indirect source.

If you use a passage from the newspaper article that includes the words of both Jones and Obama, set the context up as you lead into the quote and use single quotation marks within the double quotation marks to show which words were in quotations in the original source.



**EXAMPLE OF A QUOTE FROM AN INDIRECT SOURCE WITHIN A QUOTE:**

In his interview with Obama for the *Washington Post*, Jones writes, “The president responded to his critics by inviting them to ‘get out and talk to the people’” (A14).

Notice that in the example above, the parenthetical reference does not include “qtd. in” (quoted in) because the full context for the quote was given in the lead-in.

If you use the quote in such a way that you leave Jones out, you must indicate that Obama’s words are found in Jones’ article by using “qtd. in” in your parenthetical reference. Otherwise, your reader may be looking for Obama on your works-cited page.

**EXAMPLE OF A QUOTE FROM AN INDIRECT SOURCE GIVEN WITH**

**SUPPORTING CONTEXT:** President Obama has recently told his critics to “get out and talk to the people” (qtd. in Jones A14).

In the example above, single quotation marks are not combined with double quotation marks because no other words from the original source appear in the quote.

The combination of single and double quotation marks is only needed when words or phrases that appear in quotation marks in the original source are quoted along with additional words or phrases from the original source.

**ERROR EXAMPLE OF UNNECESSARY SINGLE QUOTATION MARKS ADDED****TO DOUBLE QUOTATION MARKS:**

After his sentence has been handed down, Darnay tells Lucie, “‘We shall meet again where the weary are at rest’” (418).

**DO IT THIS WAY INSTEAD:** After his sentence has been handed down, Darnay tells Lucie, “We shall meet again where the weary are at rest” (418).



According to the 7<sup>th</sup> ed. *MLA Handbook*, “When a quotation consists entirely of material enclosed by quotation marks in the source work, usually one pair of double quotation marks is sufficient, provided that the introductory wording makes clear the special character of the quoted material” (102).

## **Guideline 11: ALTERING QUOTATIONS**

Occasionally it will be necessary to alter quotations slightly to meet the needs of your paper. Modifications include omitting a word or words and making changes to the spelling, capitalization, or interior punctuation of the quote. Such modifications are acceptable **ONLY** if you do not misrepresent the meaning of the original words and **ONLY** if you use the accepted means of indicating that the material is being modified.

REMEMBER THAT IN MANY INSTANCES, YOU CAN AVOID AWKWARD CONSTRUCTIONS WITH ELLIPSES BY REPHRASING YOUR LEAD-IN FOR A QUOTE OR BY EMBEDDING KEY PHRASES FROM A QUOTE INTO YOUR OWN SENTENCE.

### **Section A: Ellipses**

When you need to take words out of a quote, indicate **the omission of a word or words** by inserting three ellipsis points [ . . . ] where the word or words are omitted. Type a space between each ellipsis point.

If you insert ellipses following a period, the period should retain its place following the last word of the sentence, followed by a space and then the three ellipsis marks, each with a space between them, for what will look like a total of four periods. However, if a parenthetical reference follows the ellipsis at the end of your sentence, use three periods with a space before each, and place the sentence period after the final parenthesis.

**COMPLETE ORIGINAL QUOTE EXAMPLE:** “In the corporate structure as in government, the rhetoric of achievement, of single-minded devotion to the task at hand—the rhetoric of performance, efficiency, and productivity—no longer provides an accurate description of the struggle for personal survival” (Lasch 61).

**EDITED EXAMPLE:** “In the corporate structure as in government, the rhetoric of achievement [ . . . ] no longer provides an accurate description of the struggle for personal survival” (Lasch 61).



Note that while ellipses are required when you omit something from the middle of a direct quote, you do NOT need to begin and end every quote in your paper with ellipses, even if you don't begin each quote with the beginning of the original sentence or end it where the original sentence ended. By embedding the quote in your own sentence or by clearly leading into the quote, you make it obvious that you are quoting only a part of the author's original sentence.

**EXAMPLE OF UNNECESSARY ELLIPSES:** In John Frederick's view, this minor confrontation represented "[. . .] a critical turning point [. . .]" (88) in the relationship of these two countries.

**EXAMPLE OF ACCEPTED FORM:** In John Frederick's view, this minor confrontation represented "a critical turning point" (88) in the relationship of these two countries.

Ellipses should be used at the beginning and ends of quoted passages only if there is a chance your reader will misinterpret the quote without the ellipses. If you have cut off a quote in such a way that it would be important for reader to know that you have interrupted the words of the author, you should use ellipses to indicate the break.

**EXAMPLE OF A QUOTATION REQUIRING ELLIPSES TO PREVENT MISINTERPRETATION:**

If you presented a quote in this way:

Bingham notes, "The therapy sessions have been most successful with groups that promote open communication while maintaining a consistent respect for privacy" (45).

But the full quote read as follows:

"The therapy sessions have been most successful with groups that promote open communication while maintaining a consistent respect for privacy and that do not include dangerous criminals" (45).



Then ellipses marks at the end of the quote would be helpful! This will let the reader know there may be additional requirements for success in group therapy:

**Bingham notes, "The therapy sessions have been most successful with groups that promote open communication while maintaining a consistent respect for privacy [. . .]" (45).**

### **Section B: Square Brackets**

**Why do some ellipses have square brackets around them?** In addition to indicating the omission of words in quotes, ellipses can also be used to indicate a pause or a trailing off in narration or dialogue. If you and the author you are quoting both used ellipses, it could be unclear which ellipses were in the original and which ellipses you added. To solve any potential confusion, you should put brackets around ellipses that you place inside the quoted material. While the 7th ed. of the *MLA Handbook* recommends that brackets [ ] around ellipses need only be used when the material being quoted also contains ellipses, **at EPHS, we are requiring the use of the square brackets around any changes you make within a quote, including inserted ellipsis marks.**

**EXAMPLE:** "Well, Atticus, I was just sayin' [. . .] that entailments are bad an' all that, but you said not to worry, it takes a long time sometimes . . . that you all'd ride it out together" (Lee 154).

The three ellipsis points in the second sentence do NOT have square brackets around them because Harper Lee put those ellipsis points in, not the student who wrote the paper.

According to the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook*, quotations "must reproduce the original sources exactly. Unless indicated in brackets or parentheses [. . .], changes must not be made in the spelling, capitalization, or interior punctuation of the source" (92-3).

Whenever possible, rework the way you are incorporating your quote into the text to avoid making **changes to the spelling, capitalization, or interior punctuation of the quote**. If you must alter the spelling, capitalization, or interior punctuation of the quote, indicate the change with square brackets.

**EXAMPLE:** In fact, as Tomalin notes, in the late eighteenth century "[s]eparate bedrooms was the usual form of birth control" (7), but this method clearly was not always used.



## Guideline 12: HOW TO DO INTERPOLATIONS

You will sometimes need to add insertions (called “interpolations”) or other alterations to a quote to help the reader understand the quote. According the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook*, “Occasionally, you may decide that a quotation will be unclear or confusing to your reader unless you provide supplementary information. [. . .] While such contributions to a quotation are permissible, you should keep them to a minimum and make sure to distinguish them from the original” (101). Use square brackets [ ] whenever you add anything within a quote.

Sometimes a quote contains ambiguous pronouns. Do not simply change the quote to use the name instead of the pronoun. Using square brackets, you can add the name after the pronoun.

**COMPLETE ORIGINAL QUOTE EXAMPLE:** “Perhaps he was unwilling to kill

because he was mad or because he believed it to be morally wrong” (Holm 23).

**EDITED EXAMPLE:** “Perhaps he [Hamlet] was unwilling to kill because he was

mad or because he believed it to be morally wrong” (Holm 23).

**ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF ADDING CLARIFYING INSERTIONS:** In the first act,

Hamlet soliloquizes, “Why she [Gertrude] would hang on him [Hamlet’s father] /

As if increase of appetite had grown / By what it fed on [. . .]” (1.1.143-145).

**OR, MINIMIZE INSERTIONS BY REPHRASING YOUR LEAD IN:** In the first act,

Hamlet soliloquizes about his mother’s previous devotion to his father by

describing how Gertrude “would hang on him / As if increase of appetite had

grown / By what it fed on [. . .]” (1.1.143-145).

If a quote contains a word or phrase that you would like to draw the reader’s attention to, you could put the word or phrase in **bold type** or *italics*, but to let the reader know that the bold type or italics were not in the original source, use square brackets and add the phrase [emphasis added] after the word or phrase you altered.

**EXAMPLE:** Lincoln specifically advocated a government “*for* the people [emphasis added]” (Shaw 521).



**Guideline 13: WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND AN ERROR IN A DQ**

Occasionally, you will find grammatical errors or logic errors in the original source you are using. First of all, be wary of a source that has errors. Such errors (even if they may simply be typos) undermine the credibility of a source. If you do intend to use the source despite the error(s), you will need to let your reader know that it wasn't you who made the error. You will need to assure your reader that the quotation is accurate even though the spelling or grammar might make the reader think otherwise.

Make insertions to explain errors by inserting the Latin abbreviation **[sic]** (which means "thus" or "so") in square brackets in the quotation right after the error. This means "I (the writer) know there is an error in the original here, but that's the way I found it."

**YOU DO NOT HAVE PERMISSION TO CORRECT THE ERROR!**

**EXAMPLE USING [SIC]:**

Shaw admitted, "Nothing can extinguish my interest in Shakespear's [sic] works"  
(43).



## SECTION TWO: BASIC FORMATS FOR PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION

### WHAT GOES INTO THE PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION?

If you have used the author's name as part of your lead-in sentence, you need to cite only the page number(s). According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, "If, for example, you include an author's name in a sentence, you need not repeat the name in the parenthetical page citation that follows, provided that the reference is clearly to the work of the author you mention" (216). Make sure the information in the sentence makes the author's identity clear. (To be on the safe side, however, it may be fine with your teacher to repeat the author's name in the parenthetical documentation. Check with your teacher.)

**EXAMPLE (DQ):** Sheila Stark stated, "Wilson's poetry, filled with odd ideas, reflects his reclusive nature" (24-25).

**EXAMPLE (PARAPHRASE):** Sheila Stark points out that Wilson was a recluse with odd ideas (24-25).

### A. WITH ONE AUTHOR

1. For use of a source that is listed in the works cited by the name of the author (or editor, translator, or narrator), the parenthetical reference begins with the author's last name and then the page number.

**EXAMPLE:** Many short stories published today leave the reader bewildered because they have no clear beginnings and no obvious endings (Fullmer 139).

2. In a parenthetical reference to one of two or more works by the same author, put a comma after the author's last name and add the title of the work (if brief) or a shortened version and the relevant page reference.

**EXAMPLE:**  
(Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath* 75) (Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* 3)

**EXAMPLE:** Pip and Estella's first encounters (Dickens, *Great Expectations* 54) differ markedly from the early days of games and play known to Ebenezer and Belle (Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* 36).



**EXAMPLE OF SHORTENED VERSION OF TITLE:**

Suppose two novels by Ken Kesey were used in your paper. They are *Caverns* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Here's how you would do their respective parenthetical references:

**(Kesey, *Caverns* 87) AND (Kesey, *Cuckoo's Nest* 3)**

If you state the author's name in the text, give only the title and page reference in the parentheses.

**EXAMPLE:** For Charles Dickens, his own philosophy must have matched

**Gradgrind's when the remorseful father confesses to Louisa, "I have supposed the head to be all-sufficient" (*Hard Times* 217).**

3. If you have sources in the works-cited list with more than one author with the same last name, you must add the first initial to the parenthetical reference.

**EXAMPLE:** (R. Olson 184-185) AND (C. Olson 43)

**B. WITH TWO OR THREE AUTHORS**

1. For use of a source written by two or three authors (or editors, translators, or narrators), include all of the authors.

**EXAMPLE:** This policy, although strongly opposed by Carlson (Winter and Murray 68), was later adopted by Thomas (Olson, Smith, and Peterson 70).

2. For use of a source written by two or three authors (or editors, translators, or narrators) with more than one author with the same last name, you must add the first initial to the parenthetical reference.

**EXAMPLE:** (Olson, A. Smith, and W. Smith 46)

**C. WITH FOUR AUTHORS OR MORE**

For use of a source written by four or more authors (or editors, translators, or narrators), only list the first author followed by the Latin abbreviation "et al."

**EXAMPLE:** Medieval Europe was a place of extortion (Lauser et al. 2425-33).



## **D. WITH A CORPORATE AUTHOR**

For use of a source written by a corporate author, use the corporate name as the author.

**EXAMPLE:** (National Research Council 15)

If the name is long, you may use shortened terms that are commonly abbreviated. See pages 240-257 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* for widely accepted abbreviations.

**EXAMPLE:** (Natl. Research Council 15)

You may also simply include a long name for a corporate author in the text itself so that reading is not interrupted by an extended parenthetical reference.

**EXAMPLE:** According to a study sponsored by the National Research Council, the population was increasing by more than one million annually (15).

## **E. WITH NO AUTHOR (ANONYMOUS WORKS), CITE BY TITLE**

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “In a parenthetical reference to a work alphabetized by title in the list of works cited, the full title (if brief) or a shortened version precedes the page, paragraph, section, or reference number or numbers [. . .], unless the title appears in your text. When abbreviating the title, begin with the word by which it is alphabetized. Do not, for example, shorten the title *Glossary of Terms Used in Heraldry* to *Heraldry* because this abbreviation would lead your reader to look for the bibliographic [works-cited] entry under *h* rather than *g*” (223). If two or more anonymous sources have the same title, you “add a publication fact, such as a date, that distinguishes the works” (215).

**EXAMPLE:** The brief but dramatic conclusion of the book climaxes in revealing the symbolism of the farmer’s snowy owl (“Dueling”). In winter the snowy owl feeds primarily on small rodents (“Snowy Owl,” *Hinterland*), but in spring it also feeds on the eggs of much larger waterfowl, such as geese and swans (“Snowy Owl,” *Arctic*).



**CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRIES:****Works Cited**

“Dueling Protagonists in *Struggle of the North* and *Slumber*.” *Swedish Novelists*. Association of Swedish Arts and Letters, 15 May 2008. Web. 7 Aug. 2009.

“Snowy Owl.” *Arctic Studies Center*. Natl. Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Inst., 2004. Web. 8 Aug. 2009.

“Snowy Owl.” *Hinterland Who’s Who*. Canadian Wildlife Service, 2006. Web. 8 Aug. 2009.

**F. CITING MORE THAN ONE WORK IN A SINGLE PARENTHETICAL REFERENCE**

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “If you wish to include two or more works in a single parenthetical reference, cite each work as you normally would in a reference and use semi-colons to separate the citations” (229).

**EXAMPLES:**

(Collins 47; Mali 101-33)

(Nat’l Research Council 25-35; Fu 78)



## G. WITH EDITOR, TRANSLATOR, OR COMPILER

If the source is listed on the works-cited page by the name of an editor, translator, or compiler, do not use abbreviations such as *ed.*, *trans.*, and *comp.* after the name in the parenthetical documentation. In the example below, Burton Raffel translated the anonymous epic poem Beowulf. Lines 104-106 were used.

**Note:** In citing line numbers for poetry, do not use the abbreviation *l.* or *ll.*, which can be confused with numerals. Instead, initially use the word *line* or *lines* and then, having established that the numbers designate lines, give the numbers alone.

**EXAMPLE:** The poet implies from the outset that Grendel's origin has something

diabolical about it as evidenced in this description: "He was spawned in that slime, / Conceived by a pair of those monsters born / Of Cain [. . .]" (lines 104-106). However, further into the text, it may be argued that a divine presence may be at work orchestrating Beowulf's ability to conquer Grendel and, therefore, evil itself. Hrothgar states, "Our Holy Father / Has sent him as a sign of His grace, a mark / of His favor, to help us defeat Grendel / And to end that terror" (Raffel 381-384).

### CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:

#### Works Cited

Raffel, Burton, trans. *Beowulf*. New York: New American Library, 1963. Print.



## H. CITING PART OF A WORK

According to pages 220-1 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “If you quote, paraphrase, or otherwise use a specific passage in a book, an article, or another work, give the relevant page or section (e.g., paragraph) number or numbers. When the author’s name is in your text, give only the number reference in parentheses, but if the context does not clearly identify the author, add the author’s last name before the reference. Leave a space between them, but do not insert punctuation or, for a page reference, the word *page* or *pages* or the abbreviation *p.* or *pp.*”

**EXAMPLE:** Atwell suggests that “[a] topic conference gets a writer talking” (101).

### CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:

#### Works Cited

Atwell, Nancie. “Responding to Writers and Writing.” *In the Middle: Writing, Reading, and Learning with Adolescents*. Portsmouth: Boynton Cook, 1987. 88-121. Print.

“If your source uses explicit paragraph numbers rather than page numbers—as, for example, some electronic publications do—give the relevant number or numbers preceded by the abbreviation *par.* or *pars.* If the author’s name begins such a citation, place a comma after the name” (221).

**EXAMPLE:** Chan claims that “Eagleton has belittled the gains of postmodernism” (par. 41).

### CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:

#### Works Cited

Chan, Evans. “Postmodernism and Hong Kong Cinema.” *Postmodern Culture* 10.3 (2000): n. pag. *Project Muse*. Web. 20 May 2002.

If another kind of section is numbered in the source, either write out the word for the section or use a standard abbreviation (see pages 240-247 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* for accepted abbreviations).

**EXAMPLE:** The Committee on Scholarly Editions provides an annotated bibliography on the theory of textual editing (sec. 4).



**CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:****Works Cited**

**Committee on Scholarly Editions. "Guidelines for Editors of Scholarly Editions." *Modern Language Association*. MLA, 25 Sept. 2007. Web. 22 Jan. 2008.**

When a source has no page numbers or any other kind of reference numbers (as is often the case with Web sources), no number can be given in the parenthetical reference. The work must be cited in its entirety though you may indicate in your text an approximate location of the cited passage (e.g., "in the final third of his article, Jones argues for a revisionist interpretation"). DO NOT USE THE PAGE NUMBERS OF YOUR PRINT-OUTS.

**EXAMPLE:** The utilitarianism of the Victorians "attempted to reduce decision-making about human actions to a 'felicific calculus'" (Everett).

**CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:****Works Cited**

**Everett, Glenn. "Utilitarianism." *The Victorian Web*. Ed. George P. Landow. U Scholars Programme, Natl. U of Singapore, 11 Oct. 2002. Web. 18 May 2007.**



# I. CITING INDIRECT SOURCES: USING THE ABBREVIATION

## “qtd. in”

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “Whenever you can, take material from the original source, not a secondhand one. Sometimes, however, only an indirect source is available—for example, someone’s published account of another’s spoken remarks. If what you quote or paraphrase is itself a quotation, put the abbreviation ***qtd. in*** (“quoted in”) before the indirect source you cite in your parenthetical reference” (226). So, if you are using a secondary source which quotes a primary source (which you have not actually used), you need to include “qtd.” in the parenthetical documentation.

**EXAMPLE:** Dean agrees with Jeremiah Reedy, a classics professor at Macalester College in St. Paul, who said, “You cannot read in the abstract [. . .], but you have to have the background knowledge E.D. Hirsch thinks is taken for granted by publishers of books, magazines, and newspapers” (qtd. in Dean 79).

## EXAMPLE (WITH A DIRECT QUOTE):

Samuel Johnson admitted that Edmund Burke was an “extraordinary man” (qtd. in Boswell 2: 450).

**NOTE:** There is a “2” after Boswell followed by a colon because Boswell’s *The Life of Johnson* has 6 volumes to it. The “2” refers to volume 2, and 450 is the page number.

## CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:

### Works Cited

Boswell, James. *The Life of Johnson*. Ed. George Birkbeck Hill and L. F. Powell. 6 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1934-50. Print.



**EXAMPLE (WITH A PARAPHRASE):**

The commentary of the sixteenth-century literary scholars Segni and Salviati shows them to be less than faithful followers of Aristotle (qtd. in Weinberg 1: 405, 616-617).

**CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:**

**Works Cited**

Weinberg, Bernard. *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*. 2 vols. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1961. Print.



## J. CITING COMMON WORKS OF LITERATURE: PROSE

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “In a reference to a classic prose work, such as a novel or play, that is available in several editions, it is helpful to provide more information than just a page number for the edition used; a chapter number, for example, would help readers to locate a quotation in any copy of a novel. In such a reference, give the page number first, add a semicolon, and then give other identifying information, using appropriate abbreviations [. . .]” (226).

**EXAMPLE 1:** Raskolnikov first appears in *Crime and Punishment* as a man contemplating a terrible act but frightened of meeting his talkative landlady on the stairs (Dostoevsky 1; pt. 1, ch. 1).

**EXAMPLE 2:** It is not until the middle of *To Kill a Mockingbird* that the reader fully understands the futility of impacting the jury (Lee 211; ch. 23).

**NOTE:** If your source is unpaginated but has chapter numbers, use them.

**EXAMPLE 3:** Douglass notes that he had “no accurate knowledge” of his date of birth, “never having had any authentic record containing it” (ch. 1).



## K. CITING SCRIPTURE

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “When citing scripture, provide an entry in the works-cited list for the edition you consulted. While general terms like Bible, Talmud, and Koran are not italicized, full and shortened titles of specific editions are italicized. The first time you borrow from a particular work of scripture in your manuscript, state in the text or in a parenthetical citation the element that begins the entry in the works-cited list (usually the title of the edition but sometimes an editor’s or a translator’s name). Identify the borrowing by divisions of the work—for the Bible, give the name of the book and chapter and verse numbers—rather than by a page number. Subsequent citations of the same edition may provide division numbers alone (see the *New Jerusalem Bible* example)” (227).

When included in parenthetical references, the titles of the books of the Bible and of famous literary works are often abbreviated (1 Chron. 21.8, Rev. 21.3, *Oth.* 4.2.7–13, *FQ* 3.3.53.3)

**NOTE:** According to page 91 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “the convention of using italics and quotation marks to indicate titles does not generally apply to the names of scriptural writings (including all books and versions of the Bible); of laws, acts, and similar political documents; of musical compositions identified by form, number, and key; of series, societies, buildings, and monuments; and of conferences, seminars, workshops, and courses.” The following terms all appear without italics or quotation marks: Bible, Old Testament, Genesis, Gospels, Talmud, Koran, Upanishads.

**EXAMPLE:** In one of the most vivid prophetic visions in the Bible, Ezekiel saw “what seemed to be four living creatures,” each with the faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (*New Jerusalem Bible*, Ezek. 1.5-10). John of Patmos echoes this passage when describing his vision (Rev. 4.6-8).

### CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRY:

#### Works Cited

*The New Jerusalem Bible*. Henry Wansbrough, gen. ed. New York:  
Doubleday, 1985. Print.



## L. CITING COMMON WORKS OF LITERATURE: PLAYS

In citing plays, cite by division (act, scene, line numbers) rather than page numbers. In general, use arabic numerals rather than roman numerals for division and page numbers. Do not cite the playwright's name in the parenthetical documentation if the authorship has already been established.

Let's say you are writing an analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. THIS IS THE ONLY SHAKESPEARE PLAY YOU ARE REFERENCING IN YOUR PAPER. For the very FIRST reference to the play, you are discussing a passage in act 3, scene 1, lines 56-58. Your very first parenthetical reference, then, would look like this:

**EXAMPLE:** The psychological aspects of Hamlet become most obvious in his fourth soliloquy when he contemplates the meaning of life (Shakespeare 3.1.56-58).

Once you have established that you are using Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for the entire paper, all subsequent parenthetical references need not include Shakespeare or *Hamlet*. If your second reference is to act 3, scene 1, line 202, your parenthetical reference would look like this:

**EXAMPLE:** Claudius' comment that "[m]adness in great ones must not unwatched go" (3.1.202) clearly shows his suspicion of Hamlet.

If your paper includes parenthetical references to more than just one work of literature, make sure the information in the parenthetical references clearly indicates to which work you are referring. In the example below, Shakespeare as playwright of *Romeo and Juliet* has already been clearly established. All subsequent references to *Romeo and Juliet* can include an abbreviated form of the title provided that you clearly introduce the abbreviation in parentheses immediately after the first use of the full title in the text.

According to page 250 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, "Abbreviating titles is appropriate, for example, if you repeatedly cite a variety of works by the same author. In such a discussion, abbreviations make for more concise parenthetical documentation [. . .] than the usual shortened titles would. [. . .] See pages 250-256 in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* for commonly accepted abbreviations of literary works. If your work of literature does not appear on the *MLA Handbook* abbreviations list, the *MLA Handbook* suggests, "you may use the abbreviations you find in your sources, or you may devise simple, unambiguous abbreviations of your own" (250).



**EXAMPLE:** According to Karl F. Zender, *Romeo and Juliet* (*Rom.*) presents an opposition between two worlds: “the world of the everyday,” associated with the adults in the play, and “the world of romance,” associated with the two lovers (138). Romeo and Juliet’s language of love nevertheless becomes “fully responsive to the tang of actuality” (141). This is evident in the famous balcony scene when Juliet advises Romeo to “swear not by the moon, th’ inconstant moon, / That monthly changes in circle orb, / Lest that thy love prove likewise variable” (*Rom.* 2.2.109-111). Shakespeare’s choice of words is particularly telling here because the word “variable” can be defined as “fickle” (“Variable,” def. 2b).

**EXAMPLE OF CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRIES:**

**Works Cited**

- Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Ed. J. A. Bryant, Jr. New York: New American Library, 1998. Print.
- “Variable.” Def. 2b. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1992. Print.
- Zender, Karl F. “Loving Shakespeare’s Lovers: Character Growth in *Romeo and Juliet*.” *Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet*. Ed. Maurice Hunt. New York: MLA, 2000. 137-43. Print.

Let’s say you are writing an analysis of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Because you are referencing more than one Shakespeare play, you are going to need to distinguish one from the other very clearly in your parenthetical references. For your very FIRST references to the plays, you are going to use Shakespeare as well as the play titles in full in your parenthetical references.



**EXAMPLE:** One Shakespearean protagonist seems resolute at first when he asserts, “Haste me to know’t, that I, with wings as swift / As meditation [. . .] / May sweep to my revenge” (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 1.5.35-37), but he soon has second thoughts. Another tragic figure, initially described as “too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness” (Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 1.5.17), quickly descends into horrific slaughter.

**CORRESPONDING WORKS-CITED ENTRIES:**

**Works Cited**

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York: Washington Square-Pocket, 1992. Print.

---. *Macbeth*. Ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York: Washington Square-Pocket, 1992. Print.

Now that Shakespeare, the titles of the plays, and the abbreviations you will use have been established, all subsequent references must include abbreviated forms of the titles.

**EXAMPLE:** One Shakespearean protagonist seems resolute at first when he asserts, “Haste me to know’t, that I, with wings as swift / As meditation [. . .] / May sweep to my revenge” (*Ham.* 1.5.35-37), but he soon has second thoughts. Another tragic figure, initially described as “too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness” (*Mac.* 1.5.17), quickly descends into horrific slaughter.



## M. CITING COMMON WORKS OF LITERATURE: POETRY

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, in citing line numbers for poetry, “do not use the abbreviation *l.* or *ll.*, which can be confused with numerals. Instead, initially use the word *line* or *lines* and then, having established that the numbers designate lines, give the numbers alone” (227).

**EXAMPLE:** When Keats concludes, “Beauty is truth, truth beauty” (line 49),  
 the reader is reminded of the same message he presents in “Ode to a  
 Nightingale,” another of his famous poems. So important is beauty to  
 Keats that it “is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know” (49-50).

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, “A parenthetical reference for a verse quotation set off from the text follows the last line of the quotation (as in quotations of prose)” (95).

**EXAMPLE:** Elizabeth Bishop’s “In the Waiting Room” is rich in evocative detail:

It was winter. It got dark  
 early. The waiting room  
 was full of grown-up people,  
 arctics and overcoats,  
 lamps and magazines. (6-10)

## REMINDERS WHEN CITING POETRY!

1. You do not need to put the poet's name in the parenthetical reference IF the poet's name is included in the lead-in to the quote.

**EXAMPLE:** Reflecting on the "incident" in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, "Of all the  
 things that happened there / That's all that I remember" (11-12).

**NOTE:** "T" is capitalized in the word "that's" because it was capitalized in the original poem.



2. When talking about the poet, NEVER refer to the poet by his/her first name. For example, do not call Shakespeare "William" or John Keats "John."
3. With subsequent quotations from the same poem, you do not need to put the poet's name. For example, the first time you quote from the poem, the parenthetical documentation for lines 7-8 cited in Eavan Boland's poem, "It's a Woman's World," would look like this:  
**(Boland 7-8).**

After the first citation, you can simply do this--**(12-15)**--as long as it is very clear this is the SAME Eavan Boland poem you have been discussing.

4. When switching discussion in your paper from one poet to another poet, be sure to include the poet's name again for the parenthetical reference: **(Cullen 19-21).**

**NOTE:** Keep this very clear! This may mean continuing to use the author's name and poem title and line numbers for the rest of the paper.

5. If you have been discussing Eavan Boland's poem, "It's a Woman's World," and now want to switch to discussing another Eavan Boland poem, "Outside History," you will now need to also cite the name of the poem to distinguish these two poems.

The first citation would like this: **(Boland, "It's a Woman's World" 8-10).**

The next citation would like this: **(Boland, "Outside History" 3-4).**

## **N. CITING AN ENTIRE WORK**

According to the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, "If you are citing an entire work [. . .] rather than a specific part of it, the author's name in the text may be the only documentation required" (216). If you cite an entire text in this way, be sure to include the book on your works-cited list.

**EXAMPLE:** Holm has devoted an entire book to the subject.

The 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, suggests, however, that if, for the reader's convenience, you want to "name the book in your text, you could recast the sentence" (216).

**EXAMPLE:** Holm has devoted an entire book, *Struggles of the Gifted*, to the subject.



## **O. CITING WORKS WITHOUT PAGE NUMBERS**

Especially with the increase in Web-based research, you are likely to encounter sources with no page numbers. Remember that the fundamental purpose of parenthetical documentation is to direct the reader to the right information on your works-cited page. Thus, for each paraphrase or quote in your paper, you need to give the reader the key piece of information needed--the name of the author (or, if no author, the title of the work). It is best to give that information in your lead-in to the quote or paraphrase.

If your source has no page numbers, that does not excuse you from including a parenthetical reference. If you can't give a page number, at a minimum, your parenthetical reference must give the name of the author (or the title if you are listing by title).

Additionally, the 7th ed. *MLA Handbook* offers some suggestions for information that you could use in place of page numbers: "Identify the location of the borrowed information as specifically as possible. Sources include a variety of reference markers to help users locate passages. [. . .] In a reference to a common work of literature, it is sometimes helpful to give information other than, or in addition to, the page number—for example, the chapter, book, or stanza number or the numbers of the act, scene, and line. [. . .] A page reference is unnecessary if you use a passage from a one-page work. Electronic publications sometimes include paragraph numbers or other kinds of reference numbers. Of course, sources such as films, television broadcasts, performances, and electronic sources with no pagination or other type of reference markers cannot be cited by number. Such works are usually cited in their entirety and often by title" (215).